

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SOFIA 01758 01 OF 02 150959Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02
OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 CEA-01 AGRE-00
ACDA-07 /098 W

-----036728 151011Z /14

R 120712Z AUG 77 ZFG
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3409
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
DIA WASHDC
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SOFIA 1758

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BU
SUBJECT: BULGARIAN MALAISE

REF: A) SOFIA 1626; B) MOSCOW 11547; C) SOFIA 1446

1. SUMMARY: PRESENT UNHEALTHY STATE OF BULGARIAN ECONOMY
AND BODY POLITIC RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT FUTURE OF LEADERSHIP.
END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL FEELING AMONG BULGARIA-WATCHERS IN SUMMER DOG
DAYS IN SOFIA IS THAT COUNTRY IS IN A MESS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SOFIA 01758 01 OF 02 150959Z

3. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE, WESTERN BUSINESSMEN REPORT THAT BUL-
GARIAN ECONOMIC ELEMENTS HAVE NO MONEY TO SPEND AND THAT THEIR
SLUGGISH RESPONSE IN BUY-BACK DISCUSSIONS INDICATES NOTHING TO
SELL EITHER. IN THE MEANTIME, FOREIGN DEBT LOOMS LARGE.
SOME OF IT PAYABLE IMMINENTLY. HARVEST IS PROCEEDING,
BUT WITH REPORTS OF PRODUCE ROTTING IN FIELD DUE TO LABOR

SHORTAGES, INADEQUACIES OF TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, POOR COORDINATION BETWEEN AGRICULTURAL AND MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS, ETC.

4. REPORTS ARE THAT ONE OF MAIN PURPOSES OF TODOR ZHIVKOV'S MAY 30-JUNE 6 VISIT TO USSR WAS TO TRY TO GAIN SOME ECONOMIC RELIEF FROM USSR (REF A). COMMUNIQUE RESULTING FROM HIS CRIMEA MEETING WITH BREZHNEV (REF B) DURING HIS VACATION IN USSR AUG 6-11 CONTAINS LANGUAGE INDICATING THAT TOPIC WAS AGAIN THE ECONOMY, WITH GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT ZHIVKOV WAS AGAIN ASKING RELIEF ON DELIVERIES TO USSR.

5. ON POLITICAL SIDE, IN MAY ZHIVKOV FIRED HIS LONGTIME AND ONCE TRUSTED COLLEAGUE, BORIS VELCHEV. HIS POLITBURO IS VERY SMALL, WITH TWO PRACTICALLY RETIRED MEMBERS, AMONG OTHER REASONS BECAUSE HE BROOKS NO RIVALS. PARTY RESPONSES TO PROBLEMS GIVE IMPRESSION OF LEADERSHIP STRETCHED THIN, FIREFIGHTING RATHER THAN ADMINISTERING APPROPRIATELY DELEGATED AUTHORITY.

6. VLADIMIR KOSTOV DEFECTION AND KOSTOV'S JULY 16 LE MONDE "ADDRESS TO (HIS) COUNTRYMEN," GIVING AS HIS REASON FOR DEFECTION EVER-GROWING CLOSENESS TO THE USSR, THE CENTRAL POLE OF ZHIVKOV'S POLICY, IS STILL BEING DISCUSSED IN BULGARIA. KOSTOV ADDRESS HAS APPARENTLY BEEN TRANSLATED INTO BULGARIAN AND CIRCULATED AMONG THE ELITE AND THE INTEL-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SOFIA 01758 01 OF 02 150959Z

LIGENTSIA. ONE BULGARIAN TOLD EMBOFF AUG 10 THAT FROM TONE AND SUBJECT OF KOSTOV ADDRESS, SOME BULGARIANS HAD CONCLUDED THAT HE WAS SPEAKING FOR AN ORGANIZED GROUP "IN THE SHADOWS OF THE GOVERNMENT," POSSIBLY INCLUDING VELCHEV. (EMBASSY HAS HAD NO OTHER REPORTS OF SUCH A GROUP.)

7. AND THERE ARE REPORTS OF OUTRIGHT SABOTAGE. FIRE OCCURRED AT BUILDING OF BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE NEWSPAPER, RABOTNICHESKO DELO, JULY 21. DAMAGE WAS NOT SUBSTANTIAL, BUT REPORTS OF ARSON PERSIST. CHINESE EMBOFF TOLD FRENCH CHARGE ALBERT PAVEC SAME DAY THAT THERE HAD BEEN SEVEN FIRES IN SOFIA THAT WEEK. DATA BASE IS LACKING TO EVALUATE CHINESE REPORT, BUT PAVEC SAID HE HAS FOUND CHINESE OFFICER'S TIPS USEFUL IN PAST. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN A REPORT OF AN EXPLOSION AT REFINERY IN BURGAS AND PAVEC TOLD EMBOFF AUG 11 OF ANOTHER EXPLOSION IN AN UNNAMED FACTORY IN PLEVEN SOMETIME IN JULY. GREEK EMBASSY ALSO SEEMS PERSUADED THAT SABOTAGE CAMPAIGN IS UNDERWAY.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SOFIA 01758 02 OF 02 130536Z POSS DUPE
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02
OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 CEA-01 AGRE-00
ACDA-07 /098 W

-----015732 151011Z /14

R 120712Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3410
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
DIA WASHDC
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SOFIA 1758

8. SUMMER USUALLY BRINGS IMPROVEMENT IN SOFIA LIVING CONDI-
TIONS, WITH GREATER VARIETY AND AVAILABILITY OF FOOD AND SHORTER
LINES; BUT THIS SUMMER, PERHAPS DUE TO BAD SPRING WEATHER,
THE AMELIORATION SEEMS MUCH LESS THAN USUAL. AND, IN MONTH
OF AUGUST, WHEN MOST BULGARIANS GO TO BLACK SEA OR COUNTRY
FOR THEIR VACATION, GAS HAS BEEN IN VERY SHORT SUPPLY, DUE
TO PROBLEMS OF DISTRIBUTION, PAYMENT, AND (WE HEAR) CORRUPTION.
IN ADDITION, TRANSPORTATION COSTS WERE RAISED GENERALLY
JULY 1 (REF C). SOME BULGARIANS FEEL AS IF THEY HAVE
BEEN STANDING IN LINE FOR THIRTY YEARS AND GRUMBLING IS
BECOMING MORE VOCAL AND OPEN.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SOFIA 01758 02 OF 02 130536Z POSS DUPE

9. WHAT DOES ALL THIS SPELL FOR TODOR ZHIVKOV? IN A
PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY, PRESENT STATE OF ECONOMY AND
POLITICAL SITUATION WOULD PROBABLY INDICATE HE IS IN

TROUBLE. BUT OF COURSE THIS IS NOT A DEMOCRACY, PARLIAM-
MENTARY OR OTHERWISE. ZHIVKOV SEEMS IN GOOD HEALTH, THOUGH
HE WILL BE 66 IN SEPTEMBER. HE IS SHOWING SOME OF THE
SUSPICIOUSNESS THAT CHARACTERIZES HARRIED AGING LEADERS.
ON OTHER HAND, SOFIA WILL HAVE PRESTIGIOUS UNIVERSIADA
YOUTH GAMES IN AUGUST AND EVEN MORE PRESTIGIOUS INTER-
PARLIAMENTARY UNION CONGRESS IN SEPTEMBER AND ZHIVKOV
IS PRESENTLY RESTING AT BLACK SEA. HE RECEIVED SIGNAL
HONORS FROM USSR DURING HIS MAY 30-JUNE 6 VISIT, AND
DEPOSITION OF VELCHEV SHOWED FLASH OF VERY SHARP TEETH.
IF, IN FACT, HE WENT TO THE USSR TO ASK BREZHNEV FOR
AN ECONOMIC BREAK, FAILURE OF USSR TO GRANT THAT RELIEF
COULD SPELL REAL TROUBLE FOR ZHIVKOV; IT IS THE ABILITY
TO GET ALONG WITH AND OBTAIN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR
BULGARIA FROM SUCCESSION OF SOVIET RULERS -- STALIN THROUGH
KHRUSHCHEV TO BREZHNEV - WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN HIS TRUMP
CARD IN INTRA-BULGARIAN LEADERSHIP STRUGGLES.
FELDMAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SOFIA01758
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770293-0764
Format: TEL
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770867/aaaacefo.tel
Line Count: 188
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8e45755b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 SOFIA 1626, 77 MOSCOW 11547, 77 SOFIA 1446
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1616085
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BULGARIAN MALAISE
TAGS: PINT, BU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8e45755b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009